

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A method for manufacturing a programmable logic controller (PLC), said method comprising:

providing a central processing unit (CPU) configured for a ~~programmable logic controller (PLC)~~ PLC including a PLC module bus for coupling at least one PLC module to the CPU;

providing a means for wireless radio frequency communications between the PLC and a plurality of remote devices; and

operationally coupling the means for wireless radio frequency communications to the CPU, ~~wherein~~ the CPU ~~[[is]]~~ mounted on a backplane of a rack, ~~wherein~~ rack such that the means and the CPU communicate without using the PLC module bus.

2. (original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said operationally coupling the means to the CPU comprises mounting the means for wireless radio frequency communications and the CPU to a CPU card.

3. (original) A method according to claim 1 wherein providing a means for wireless radio frequency communications comprises providing a Bluetooth protocol transmitter/receiver.

4. (original) A method according to claim 1 wherein providing a means for wireless radio frequency communications comprises providing an IEEE 802.11 protocol transmitter/receiver.

5. (original) A method according to claim 1 wherein providing a means for wireless radio frequency communications comprises providing a cellular protocol transmitter/receiver.

6. (original) A method according to claim 1 wherein providing a CPU configured for a PLC comprises providing a CPU configured for a PLC comprising a Network Interface Unit.

7. (previously presented) A method for communicating, said method comprising:

providing a plurality of wireless communication devices;

sending wireless messages from the plurality of wireless communication devices to a programmable logic controller (PLC) having a central processing unit (CPU) and a PLC module bus for coupling at least one PLC module to the CPU; and

operationally coupling a means for wireless radio frequency communications to the CPU, wherein the CPU is mounted on a backplane of a rack, wherein the means for wireless radio frequency communications and the CPU communicate without using the PLC module bus.

8. (currently amended) A method according to claim 7 wherein said sending wireless messages comprises sending wireless messages from the plurality of wireless communication devices to ~~a programmable logic controller (PLC) having a central processing unit (CPU) and a PLC module bus for coupling at least one PLC module to the CPU~~ the PLC, the CPU is coupled to ~~[[a]]~~ the means for wireless radio frequency communications such that ~~the means for wireless radio frequency communications and CPU communicate without using the PLC module bus, and~~ the CPU and the means for wireless radio frequency communications are both mounted on a CPU card.

9. (currently amended) A Programmable Logic Controller (PLC) comprising:

a backplane comprising at least one module connector and a module bus;

a central processing unit (CPU) card mounted on said backplane; and

a transmitter/receiver mounted on said CPU card, said transmitter/receiver operationally coupled to said CPU to communicate therebetween without using said module bus, wherein said CPU is mounted on said backplane via said CPU card, said PLC configured to communicate with ~~a plurality of remote wireless devices~~ at least one controlled input/output module installed in a remote rack using said transmitter/receiver.

10. (previously presented) A PLC according to claim 9 wherein said CPU communicates with a module connected to said backplane via said at least one module connector and said module bus.

11. (original) A PLC according to claim 9 wherein the transmitter/receiver is a Bluetooth protocol transmitter/receiver.

12. (original) A PLC according to claim 9 wherein the transmitter/receiver is an IEEE 802.11 protocol transmitter/receiver.

13. (original) A PLC according to claim 9 wherein the transmitter/receiver is a cellular protocol transmitter/receiver.

14. (original) A PLC according to claim 9 wherein said PLC comprises a Network Interface Unit.

15. (previously presented) An apparatus comprising:

a processor;

a radio frequency receiver operationally coupled to said processor;

a radio frequency transmitter operationally coupled to said processor, said transmitter is configured to send a wireless message to a programmable logic controller (PLC) having a central processing unit (CPU) and a PLC module bus for coupling at least one PLC module to the CPU; and

means for wireless radio frequency communications operationally coupled to the CPU, wherein the CPU is mounted on a backplane of a rack, wherein the means and the CPU communicate without using the PLC module bus, said PLC configured to communicate with said processor and a plurality of remote wireless devices.

16. (original) An apparatus according to claim 15 wherein said means for wireless radio frequency communications comprises a Bluetooth protocol means.

17. (original) An apparatus according to claim 15 wherein said means for wireless radio frequency communications comprises an IEEE 802.11 means.

18. (original) An apparatus according to claim 15 wherein means for wireless radio frequency communications comprises a cellular protocol means.

19. (original) An apparatus according to claim 15 wherein said PLC comprises a Network Interface Unit.

20. (original) An apparatus according to claim 15 wherein said CPU and said means for wireless radio frequency communications are mounted on a CPU card.

21. (canceled)